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Deputy Director of the CIA, John N. McMahon

Address at the Army Intelligence Ball

Fort Myer Officers Club

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR JOHN N. McMAHON: Anyone in CIA really appreciates many things. The first thing we learn to appreciate is that the only thing worse than giving an after-dinner speech is listening to one.

[Laughter.]

So I will be very merciful to all of us, not really because I want to, but because Barbara Williams insists on it. When I thought I was going to be on about 9:30, she elicited a promise that I only talk for about five minutes. Now that it's 10 after 10:00, she had me down at 30 seconds by the time I hit the platform.

Anyone at CIA has to have a very warm glow in their heart for military intelligence. We were borne out of military intelligence. We were borne from a guy named General Donovan, who had the vision during World War II to reach out and take university professors, to take bankers, to take lawyers, to take people from all walks of life throughout the United States and weave them into an intelligence organization. He dared at that time to use intelligence to win a war.

But equally important, he dared to win the peace and preserve it. He had the vision to realize that this nation could not put intelligence away and mothball it for the next war. And he fashioned out of those remnants of World War II the beginnings of what you now know today as CIA.

CIA has had the honor in times past of having two Army generals as Directors. White Vandenberg was one of our early Directors in '46 and '47 before he defected to the Air Force and became eventually the Chief of Staff. And we had Bedell Smith in 1950 through '53, a man that I came to honor and respect when I

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came to the agency in 1951. Bedell Smith was given the problem of taking the gung-ho O.S.S. types and blending them with the political analysts and the psychological warfare types, which were then vested in the State Department. And he showed that he was a man of character, a man at times that was very hard. In fact, he was so concerned about how these operations could be fused that he leaned very heavily on our then Deputy Director of Operations. It more or less became a way of life in the morning to go in and watch Bedell Smith beat up on the DDO.

And one day after a series of days when life was pretty tough for the DDO, one of the other officers at the table slid a cartoon across to him. The cartoon depicted a beat-up fighter sitting in his corner bleeding, his eyes swollen and his manager standing over him with a white towel fanning him, saying "Hang in there. I think you're beginning to make him sick."

But Bedell did put the agency on the road which has caused the country, I think, to enjoy a very unique capability, because out of that was spawned that thing known as the Director of Central Intelligence and the intelligence community, where the synergistic effect of talent, experience and dedication across all walks of life, in all the services, in the Department of State and in CIA could be brought together to produce for our policy-makers the kind of intelligence we need.

As General Odom commented earlier, intelligence is not new to this country. Our first early warning system was from a gentleman ~~guy~~ named Paul Revere, who said "One if by land and two if by sea" in the North Church. It's unfortunate that Paul Revere also had to live in the real world, where (as) the historians have proven after he got back from that fateful ride and submitted his voucher, the finance officer disallowed it. #2

[Laughter.]

But gentlemen, the first President of the United States, George Washington, really was the forefather of intelligence in many ways. He reached across the entire spectrum of intelligence and intelligence operations. He had a simple statement when he wrote to Colonel Clayton in 1771 and he said that necessity for the procurement of good intelligence was so apparent it need not be urged any more. He arranged for stay-behind activities. He was an expert at propaganda, and then deception. And he really realized that intelligence had to become an integral way of government and military life. #3

In 1881, the United States Army was clever enough to come out with cover stories which even to this day anyone in CIA is very envious of. They fashioned the program known as the Hunting and Fishing League. Thereby, military personnel would #4.

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go off on ostensibly hunting and fishing forays, where they canvassed the entire St. Lawrence Waterway, a few years later did the Canadian Pacific Railway. And that program remained in the United States Army until 1928, when that same finance officer came along from Paul Revere's days and decided that the United States Army wasn't getting its bang for a buck and cut the program.

We had our President of the United States the other day make a commentary on the need for intelligence when he advocated that the investment in intelligence was well worth the United States taxpayers insuring that we had a strong program. And when you look at what faces the United States today throughout the world, it's enormous. You speak in military intelligence of fusion of the various disciplines of intelligence, whether it's photographic or signals intelligence or human. But in today's world, we can no longer enjoy those simple disciplines. Military intelligence is fraught with economic and political considerations worldwide. When you look at the countries of the world, you have to not only consider the politics in that country, but the economic well-being and how that well-being can foster a military defensive program.

And we see the lesser developed nations of the world with almost a half a trillion dollars' worth of debt, which shapes not only the economic world, but also leaves those countries vulnerable to dramatic instability, instability which cannot be sustained by simple military intelligence. It's for that reason that we, under the DCI's umbrella, sit down and view our national estimates and the product of our national programs. Military intelligence plays not only a vital role, but has an equal voice. And in today's world, that's essential.

Our nation needs the best intelligence there is, and it deserves it. And we can't afford anything less. As a person who's spent his entire career in intelligence, I for one am very grateful for people like you who are willing to dedicate your lives and your talents to making sure that this nation indeed has the very best of intelligence; intelligence that is needed by your department; but intelligence that is needed by our national policy-makers and the President.

Thank you very much. And let's dance.

[Applause.]

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